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General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/38 entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 19 February 2013, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. The reply of the European Union is reproduced in section III, in accordance with the modalities set out in resolution 65/276. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

China

[Original: Chinese]
[31 May 2013]

Resolution 67/38

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

China is in favour of finding solutions to non-proliferation issues by political and diplomatic means. In its view, the drivers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should be eliminated through the creation of a global and regional security environment featuring mutual trust and cooperation; the authority, effectiveness and universality of international non-proliferation mechanisms should be maintained and enhanced in real earnest; the impartiality and non-discrimination of international non-proliferation efforts should be safeguarded; a balance must be struck between nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of science and technology; and double standards must be forsaken.

China has always dealt with the question of non-proliferation in a highly responsible manner, having acceded to all the international treaties and become a member of all the organizations in the field of non-proliferation. China supports the Security Council's appropriate role in this field, attaches importance to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) regarding non-proliferation and has taken an active part in the work and outreach activities of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), thus contributing to the full and balanced implementation of that resolution. China gives priority to international exchanges and cooperation in the field of non-proliferation, and has maintained dialogue and exchanges with the United States of America, the European Union and various multinational non-proliferation mechanisms so as to share experience and practices.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[26 April 2013]

Article 81 of the Constitution of Colombia prohibits the manufacture, import or use of weapons of mass destruction and the introduction of nuclear or toxic waste into the national territory.

Colombia actively participates in multilateral forums in which issues of international interest are addressed with the aim of concluding agreements that safeguard the objective that inspired the establishment of the United Nations and that honour its purposes and principles by supporting initiatives that make it possible to free the world from the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

Disarmament, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, biological agents and chemicals are principles of Colombia's foreign policy. In that connection, Colombia is a party to the primary international treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation, namely:

Nuclear weapons

- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
- Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco);
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

In fulfilment of its obligations as a State party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Colombia has concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency and an additional protocol thereto.

Within the framework of IAEA, Colombia has also signed and ratified the following international legal instruments:

- Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material;
- Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident;
- Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency;
- Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Biological weapons

- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction.

Chemical weapons

- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction.

As a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Colombia recognizes the role of the Conference as the only negotiating forum for issues relating to disarmament and international security. Furthermore, our country presided over the Conference from 30 May to 24 June 2011 and submitted a document entitled "Thoughts on the current state of the Conference on Disarmament and how to strengthen it" (see CD1913).

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2013]

The growing threats to international peace and security and the new perils in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation confirm the relevance of General Assembly resolution 67/30.

Multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. Multilateralism must be the core principle in negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The stalemate in disarmament negotiations, which is the result of a lack of political will on the part of certain stakeholders, has left the multilateral disarmament machinery in stasis for over a decade.

The unilateral actions of some countries in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, which seek to promote the negotiation of multilateral international instruments outside the framework of the United Nations, are a cause for grave concern. Such actions erode confidence in the international system, the foundations of the United Nations itself and the credibility of multilateral agreements on disarmament.

The General Assembly of the United Nations, as the Organization's most representative and democratic body, must play the central role in efforts to consolidate the multilateral approach. Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism and the multilateral decision-making process.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[15 March 2013]

Iraq affirms the importance of a multilateral approach to disarmament and non-proliferation, given that multilateralism is a democratic, useful and valid negotiating method. Multilateralism ensures that a consensus is reached and that States respect their disarmament commitments under the international disarmament instruments to which they are parties. Iraq furthermore affirms the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy as the core principle of negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation, because resorting to dialogue and multilateral diplomacy can resolve tensions and conflict peacefully. The multilateral approach should underpin the Organization's efforts to urge all States to accede to the international instruments

that are aimed at limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the foremost of which are nuclear weapons, because of their highly destructive nature. It is difficult to maintain international peace and security without reaching common and practical solutions through negotiation and, subsequently, collective agreements through negotiation. The goals of disarmament and arms control cannot be achieved unilaterally. Iraq believes that the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of resolution 67/38 is an important step towards promoting joint international action to unify multilateral efforts on disarmament and combating proliferation, particularly as the current global challenges require States to take collective and effective measures in order to address any threat to international peace and security.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]
[22 April 2013]

As is well known, this subject was included in the agenda of the First Committee of the General Assembly 10 years ago in order to reaffirm the idea that multilateralism was the core principle to be applied during negotiations in this area and of promoting cooperation and consultation among States parties to the relevant instruments in the event that they failed to meet their obligations or threatened to resort to unilateral action.

It is also common knowledge that the possession of weapons of mass destruction and the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons, as well as the series of failed political and diplomatic attempts to achieve substantial progress in these two areas, continue to pose a grave threat. This is a process in which setbacks and disappointments are the exception rather than the rule and multilateral efforts are becoming ever more necessary since the very pillars of the international security regime are increasingly at risk.

Without prejudice to the importance of past or potential efforts in bilateral, subregional or regional forums aimed at strengthening implementation of the relevant treaties or conventions currently in force, there is a persistent need for a multilateral approach in order to effectively eliminate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to halt and reduce the accumulation of conventional weapons. For this reason, there should be no doubt that any institutional attempt to revitalize the international disarmament agenda requires the active participation of the competent United Nations intergovernmental bodies.

The phenomenon of economic, social and cultural globalization, which has led to both benefits and crises far and wide in varying proportions, has created, among other things, the phenomenon of interdependence. In that regard, it is worth recalling that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has been stressing the need to address the inherent challenges of disarmament and non-proliferation in the context of a new multilateralism that focuses on cooperation rather than confrontation and on creativity rather than stagnation.

To a large extent, the sustainability and continuity of many bilateral and regional efforts in both areas require the integration of those efforts into a broader multilateral framework. Thus, it is still necessary to develop and implement a

coherent global strategy. In the case of the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum on the subject, the need is particularly clear.

Thus, Uruguay fully shares the European Union's particularly explicit acknowledgement, on several occasions, that it "firmly believes that a multilateral approach to security, disarmament and non-proliferation is the best way to maintain international peace and security".

And, because disarmament and non-proliferation are closely linked, it is also important to adopt a global approach that promotes balanced progress in both areas while taking into account any factor or circumstance arising from the threat of proliferation.

For these and other reasons, an effective multilateral approach is the best response to such challenges. The current cases of North Korea and Iran not only provide clear examples of the need to seek solid diplomatic solutions; they also illustrate that such solutions must be supported or endorsed by the international community as a whole.

Ultimately, in spite of lost time and failed efforts, the call to strengthen and revitalize the multilateral disarmament mechanisms has become urgent even though, for over a decade, those mechanisms have not come close to meeting the expectations of the international community. That call has been and continues to be based on the clear recognition that, now more than ever, global security issues require solutions on a multilateral scale. In that regard, a close look at the plan of action adopted in 2010 by the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons shows that a significant part of its agenda can only be implemented through multilateral channels.

III. Reply received from the European Union

Support to effective multilateralism is one of the guiding principles of the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction adopted in 2003. Promotion of the universality of international treaties, conventions and other instruments remains an overall aim of the Union in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, in accordance with the objectives of the above-mentioned Strategy. The European Union initiatives underpinned by this principle have implied both political support to the multilateral instruments and financial support to the relevant international agencies with the general objective of enhancing the credibility of the multilateral regime in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear issues

– The Union has been actively involved in the 2015 review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by providing political support to the universalization and implementation of the Treaty. Together with its Non-Proliferation Consortium, the Union organized seminars to promote confidence-building and in support of a process aimed at establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East;

- The Union has enhanced its support to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and remains a key donor to the Nuclear Security Fund. It has continued to provide support to the Agency's activities related to cases of non-compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

- The Union has continued to engage in renewed efforts with the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the E 3 plus 3 format, aimed at finding a negotiated solution that would restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme;

- The Union has continued to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to full compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and IAEA safeguards obligations. It also renewed its appeal to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, urging it to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to refrain from any further provocative acts, in particular in the form of new nuclear tests;

- The Union has conducted political démarches to promote the universalization of the IAEA Additional Protocol;

- The Union has actively promoted the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, based on the relevant Council decisions in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and by conducting outreach efforts towards all countries that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty. In November 2012, it adopted a new Council decision to provide additional support (almost €5.2 million) for the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization;

- The Union has continued to persistently press for the immediate start of negotiations, in the Conference on Disarmament, on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Chemical issues

- A new Council decision in support of activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was adopted in March 2012. A Council decision for the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Third Review Conference) was adopted in November 2012 and, in cooperation with the European Union Institute for Security Studies, the Union organized a successful side event regarding European Union-OPCW cooperation in the margins of the Third Review Conference in The Hague. The Union, which accounts for 40 per cent of the OPCW budget spent on disarmament and non-proliferation projects worldwide, strongly engaged in the Third Review Conference, with the aim to reinforce the regime even further, to promote its universalization and full national implementation.

Biological issues

- A new Council decision in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention was adopted on 23 July 2012. On the margins of the Meeting of the States parties to the Convention held in Geneva in December 2012 and in cooperation with the Implementation Support Unit of the Biological and Toxin

Weapons Convention, the Union organized a successful side event regarding the Council decision.

Missiles

- The Union has continued to strongly support The Hague Code of Conduct and its universalization. All its Member States have subscribed to the Code;
- A new Council decision was adopted in July 2012 in support not only of The Hague Code of Conduct but of missile non-proliferation in general. Based on that Council decision, the Union organized an outreach event for signatory and non-signatory States in New York in the margins of the First Committee of the General Assembly in October 2012;
- States members of the Union carried out a joint outreach campaign in support of the draft resolution entitled "The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation", tabled by the Republic of Korea in the First Committee at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly and co-sponsored by all States members of the Union; the draft resolution was eventually adopted.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

- The Union boosted its support to third countries with a view to assisting them with meeting their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and to enhancing the skills of State officials involved in the export control process by organizing, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), a number of regional workshops, and by carrying out bilateral visits.

Space

- Since 2008, the Union has been promoting the development of an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. In June 2012, it formally presented the draft Code to the international community in Vienna;
- The Union intends to develop the Code of Conduct further in an inclusive and transparent manner. The process that started in Vienna in June 2012 continues in the context of open-ended consultations on the draft Code (co-hosted with Ukraine in Kiev on 16 and 17 May 2013).